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NATO ENLARGEMENT

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NATO ENLARGEMENT

ISSUE DEFINITION

The question of NATO enlargement seems to have been, at least partially, decided. In July 1997, NATO heads of state will meet in Madrid, Spain, to issue an invitation to Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and possibly one or two other Central European countries, to join the Alliance. It is hoped that the admittance of the first group of new members will be complete by 1999, the fiftieth anniversary of NATO.

The initiative has not been welcomed by Russia. With the induction of these new states, NATO forces could be deployed near Russia's borders. Indeed, the Kremlin has warned that, should expansion proceed in a manner it determines to be against its interests, Russia might consider merging with Belarus to create a large new state on the borders of eastern Europe. For east and central Europeans, integration represents affirmation that they are an integral part of "Europe"; for Russians it is a perceived threat to their security.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

Efforts to restructure NATO in response to the new European security situation have been underway since 1990, the year in which the London NATO Summit pronounced the end of the Cold War. The London Declaration also shifted emphasis from NATO's traditional goal of collective defence to that of common security. The latter, first articulated in the 1982 Palme Report, stressed that stable security could be achieved in conjunction only with an adversary, not against an adversary.



Common security stresses the importance of arms control, confidence-building measures (CBMs), enhanced dialogue, and greater transparency. Thus, the Vienna Document of the 1990 Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) provided for the annual exchange of data on military activities, the regulation of military manoeuvres and an enhanced use of military observers. The 1992 Open Skies agreement promoted greater transparency of military activities by allowing certain types of aerial inspections. The notion of common security was subsequently broadened to that of cooperative security, which includes not only military, but social and economic precepts as well. The belief is that, while confidence-building measures on the military side are essential, a variety of non-traditional security threats also need to be addressed. Many of these, such as environmental decay and resource management, have transboundary implications. Therefore, true security is multifaceted and can be achieved only if nations take into account the importance of socio-economic, environmental and human rights concerns.

It is therefore recognized that the effective management of the new "security environment" will have to be done so as to ease what might otherwise prove to be intractable burdens for many states. Again, this requires one to think not only in military-strategic terms but in social and economic ones as well. Indeed, the strength of the Alliance has historically been buttressed not only by the requisites of military security but also by the shared values of its members. Along with a basic commitment to democracy and market economics, the Alliance has been characterized by common social and cultural values. Some of these will also be shared by new entrants; others might not be.

A. New Initiatives

As well, NATO's intra-Alliance functions are as relevant today as they were during the Cold War. In stabilizing relations among West European nations, the Alliance set standards of transparency and operational integration which, if extended further afield, could only help enhance general security. Alliance countries have been able to share enough in the way of military information to remain confident in one another's basic intentions. As well, the allied military establishments exercise together and perform common functions to such an

extent that the exchange of reassuring information is continuous and automatic. Some extension of this to Russia and other members of the former Soviet bloc could do much to help "de-nationalize" security policy, leaving the defence of national territory as the main determinant of force configuration. This is not naively to suggest that "power projection" will cease to be of interest for major state actors; it is merely to argue on behalf of establishing those conditions that might, it is hoped, make it of less concern in future calculations.

NATO has tried to promote stability in the former Soviet bloc in two ways. First, the Alliance helps promote political reform in the region through a variety of programs and institutions for dialogue and cooperation on security issues. Most notable among these are the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) and the Partnership for Peace (PfP). Through these mechanisms, NATO can assist new regimes in reshaping their defence policies, structures and planning processes. In particular, these new arrangements can re-inforce democratic control of the armed forces and respect for civilian authority by exposing central and east European leaders to Western models of civil-military relations.

Through NACC and PfP, the Alliance also enhances the security of the countries of central and east Europe by offering assurance that they would not have to face external threats entirely on their own. This initiative thus enables them to focus greater effort on domestic political and economic reform. To any participant who perceives a direct threat to its security, PfP offers formal consultation with the Alliance, as well as concrete military ties with NATO members via involvement in a variety of military activities and operations.

The participating nations of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council have undertaken a variety of joint projects, generally funded by NATO countries, in a wide range of areas. These include scientific and environmental projects as well as those in the field of defence. Partnership for Peace projects are worked out individually and the nations concerned are expected to provide resources for implementation. Signing states commit themselves to transparency in defence and budgetary processes, and to ensuring democratic control of their armed forces. As well, they participate in joint planning and training in order to prepare themselves for participation in peacekeeping operations with NATO forces. It would not be unrealistic to suggest that, if the PfP programme is seriously pursued, the organization,

doctrine and equipment of some former Soviet bloc forces will become compatible with those of NATO.

B. Balance-of-Power or Institutional Approach

There are two basic, though fundamentally different, ways of managing international security. One is the balance of-power-approach, whereby stability is achieved by a balance of equal and opposing forces among countries, especially large ones, who engage in power politics without much regard for international law or for legal commitments. The other is the institutional approach, whereby groups of countries bind themselves together with legal obligations to ensure their security. In such a situation even economic and domestic policies may also conform with one another. The European Union is the classic example of that approach.

For a time it seemed that Russia might become part of such an institutional approach; something Russians themselves desired. However, the current situation is one wherein Russia is being drawn back toward the traditional system of power balances. Russia had proposed that NATO and the Warsaw Pact be put under the umbrella of the CSCE, which would become a sort of "super-NATO," responsible for maintaining security in America, Europe, and Eurasia. The idea was rejected out of hand, however, because it would have extended Russia's influence into the West. The other option - Russian membership in NATO - would have significantly altered the balance and nature of the Alliance, and those who had shown initial enthusiasm for such a possibility quickly backed away.

C. Scenarios for Enlargement

There are basically three scenarios according to which enlargement of NATO might take place. First, there is the "open door" policy based on self-differentiation. Here, the extent and pace of enlargement would be determined by the countries' desire to join and their ability to meet the standards set by the Alliance for new members. Membership would, in principle, be open to all participants in NATO's Partnership for Peace. The danger with this approach is that NATO could, over the long run, develop into little more than a somewhat

smaller, though equally toothless, version of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

A second approach to enlargement has been referred to as "parallel expansion." The suggestion here is that the list of NATO candidates should be the same as the list of current and potential members of the European Union (EU). Proponents of this approach argue that the latter list includes what the majority of Europeans consider "Europe," thereby excluding Russia and Ukraine. However, EU membership is expected eventually to include 25 or so countries. The question then again becomes, "would an alliance of that size lose its strategic direction and suffer from the lack of cooperation the EU now faces?"

A third option is to limit enlargement to a few countries, according to strategic criteria, and then cap the membership. Proponents believe in granting membership to only a handful of countries in east and central Europe. Most NATO countries, it is argued, do not have vital interests in the Balkans or the Baltic states and should not be expected to offer security guarantees there. Furthermore, whereas Moscow may tolerate a limited enlargement to east and central Europe, it could well regard an open ended approach as "rolling encirclement," potentially leading to protracted confrontation between Russia and NATO. Capping its membership would thus keep the Alliance from becoming overburdened and could also help minimize conflict with Russia over enlargement.

It is most unlikely that Russia will ever become a member of NATO; yet, this does not mean that we will see the sort of confrontation between Russia and the "West" that we did during the Cold War. When looking at the question of expansion from a Russian perspective one can readily understand why Russians express concern. Russia has been invaded from Poland twice this century, losing more than 35 million people as a result. NATO membership for Poland, which itself has ample historical reason to be wary of Russia, would put NATO tanks, artillery, and infantry on the eastern border of Poland. For what reason, one might ask. The main one, as the Russians probably understood, is that they are still perceived as a potential enemy.

D. Shared Interests

On the positive side, there is enough by way of common interest between Russia and the West to suggest that future relations will continue to develop positively; these interests are as follows:

- Avoiding another arms race; (Russia simply cannot finance another arms buildup and the West's first interest in Russia lies in having a stable nuclear superpower.)
- Preventing nuclear proliferation;
- Ensuring the stability of eastern and central Europe, despite differences on the question of NATO enlargement.
- Russia's policing of the unstable countries around its rim, where instability threatens not only Russia but also Western interests;
- the West and Russia may eventually need each other's help in managing what could potentially be a yet more difficult relationship: a rich, powerful, and assertive China.

The foregoing offers hope that the relationship between Russia and the West will be managed more along "institutional" lines than on the basis of traditional balance-of-power relationships. If Russian democracy takes root, its economy grows and it accepts stability in east and central Europe as one of its main strategic interests, then the ties between Russia and the West will continue to grow positively.

E. Requirements

In order to be accepted, prospective Alliance members will have to have demonstrated a commitment to and respect for OSCE norms and principles, including the

peaceful resolution of ethnic disputes, external territorial disputes including irredentist claims, and internal jurisdictional disputes. In addition, they will need to have shown a commitment to promoting stability and well-being through economic liberalization, social justice and environmental responsibility. Finally, new entrants will have to demonstrate that they have established appropriate democratic and civilian control of their defence forces.

From a military perspective, NATO has indicated that new members must be prepared to share the roles, risks, responsibilities, benefits, and burdens of common security and collective defence. Important to the military contribution of new members will be their commitment to pursue in good faith the objectives of standardization that are essential to Alliance strategy and operational effectiveness. In the first instance, this will require that emphasis be placed on inter-operability. As a minimum, members will need to accept NATO doctrine and policies relating to standardization and aim at achieving a sufficient level of training and equipment to be able to operate effectively with NATO forces. Current NATO standardization priorities include commonality of doctrines and procedures, interoperability of command, control and communications and major weapons systems, and interchangeability of ammunition and primary combat supplies. In its Study On NATO Enlargement, the Alliance listed the following as its basic expectations of new members:

- Conformity to the basic principles embodied in the Washington Treaty: democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law;
- Acceptance of NATO as a community of like-minded nations joined together for collective defence and the preservation of peace and security, with each nation contributing to the security and defence from which all member nations benefit;
- A firm commitment to the principles, objectives and undertakings included in the Partnership for Peace Framework Document;
- A commitment to good faith efforts to build consensus within the Alliance on all issues, since consensus is the basis of Alliance cohesion and decision-making;

- An undertaking to participate fully in the Alliance consultation and decision-making process on political and security issues of concern to the Alliance;
- The establishment of a permanent representation at NATO Headquarters;
- The establishment of an appropriate national military representation at Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) and at Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic (SACLANT);
- Readiness to nominate qualified candidates to serve on the International Military Staff and in the Integrated Military Structure if and as appropriate;
- Contributions to Alliance budgets, according to budget shares to be agreed;
- Participation, as appropriate, in the exchange of Allied intelligence, which is based entirely on national contributions;
- Application of NATO security rules and procedures.

F. Canadian Position

Canada favours NATO enlargement but, at the same time, recognizes that Alliance relations with Russia are key to building security in Europe. Thus, Canada remains sensitive to Russian concerns about NATO troops on its borders. It is generally expected that Canada will support the entrance of Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic to the Alliance when the time comes.

PARLIAMENTARY ACTION

There has been no parliamentary action at this time.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1991 - The Soviet Union formally came to an end by agreement between the presidents of Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus.
- 1991- The Rome Declaration called for a regular dialogue and partnership between NATO and former "east bloc" countries.
- 1992 - NATO invited former Soviet Republics and former Warsaw Treaty Organization states to join the North Atlantic Cooperation Council.
- 1994 - At the Brussels NATO summit, the creation of the Partnership for Peace program was proposed.
- 1995 - Study on NATO Enlargement was produced by the Alliance.
- 1996 - NATO committed itself to begin a process for admittance of new members. First entrants are expected to be Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic.
- 1997 - Russia threatened to merge with Belarus if NATO enlargement proceeded.

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